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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 6192**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 1003

**NOTE PREPARED:** Jan 26, 2010

**BILL AMENDED:** Jan 25, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Public Assistance Matters and Voting Registration.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Rep. Riecken

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading - 1<sup>st</sup> House

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
☒ **DEDICATED**  
☒ **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State

**Summary of Legislation:** (Amended) This bill establishes the Committee on the Administration of Public Assistance and specifies the Committee's responsibilities. The bill specifies actions to be taken by the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) if an unfavorable evaluation is received or if a majority of the Committee votes to terminate a contract for eligibility determinations for public assistance services.

The bill sets forth requirements for a system for making eligibility determinations for public assistance services. It requires FSSA to attempt to resolve any issues with an application for public assistance in the initial contact with the applicant. It also requires FSSA to post specified material on the FSSA website.

The bill requires the Office of the Secretary of Family and Social Services to establish an independent monitoring system to evaluate the quality of the eligibility determinations for public assistance services and sets forth requirements for the monitoring system.

The bill requires a public assistance office and a program administering the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program to provide voter registration assistance to each individual who in person, by telephone, or by electronic means applies for service or assistance, applies for recertification or renewal of services or assistance, or submits a change of address form. It also requires that voter registration forms allow, but not require, an individual completing the form to provide an electronic mail address. (Current law provides these offices must distribute voter registration forms and assist applicants on the premises.)

**Effective Date:** (Amended) July 1, 2010; Upon passage.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** (Revised) *Summary:* Provisions concerning the establishment of the

Committee on the Administration of Public Assistance would have routine administrative expenses and require no reimbursement for the Committee members.

Provisions concerning the evaluation of the eligibility system have an unknown fiscal impact. The bill requires evaluation reports, contracts, contract amendments, and any change orders or changes in reimbursement to be posted on the FSSA Internet web site. This should be a routine administrative expense.

The voter registration provisions of the bill would provide for FSSA employees, subcontractors, or independent contractors in the county offices to complete voter registrations over the phone or electronically using the Secretary of State's secure website authorized by P.L. 120-2009. These offices are currently required to assist applicants with voter registrations.

(Revised) *Additional Details: Committee on the Administration of Public Assistance:* The bill establishes the 10-member Committee to be comprised of eight legislators and two lay members. Beginning April 1, 2010, the Committee is required to meet every 60 days and may meet at any time during the calendar year. The Committee members serve without salary per diem or reimbursement for travel expenses. The bill specifies that FSSA is required to report at each Committee meeting on the administration of public assistance programs. The Legislative Services Agency (LSA) is required to provide staff support for the Committee. The bill's requirements are within the routine administrative functions of LSA and FSSA and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

The bill provides that if an unfavorable evaluation is received or if a majority of the Committee votes to terminate a contract for eligibility determinations for services, FSSA must terminate a contract and may not enter into or renew a contract for this activity. The cost of this provision would depend on actions taken by the Committee or the results of the evaluation required to be performed.

The bill requires FSSA to establish an independent monitoring system outside FSSA to evaluate the quality of the eligibility determination process and subsequent contacts with FSSA offices by public assistance recipients. This requirement could be performed by a contractor or another state agency. The bill specifies that the evaluation must include every contact with an applicant from the initial application for services to the final determination of eligibility and any subsequent appeals. The evaluation is also to determine at what point in the process applicants drop out and the reasons they do not continue with the application process. It is not known if FSSA has an evaluation contract in place that would include or could, by change order, include the specified data. The bill also requires the evaluation to include a monthly written report of the operational expenditures made for eligibility determinations for services. The cost of the evaluation provision is not known at this time.

(Revised) *Voter Registration Provisions:* The bill requires public assistance offices and Women, Infants, and Children program offices to assist applicants with voter registration applications or changes in the office or over the telephone or Internet. The bill authorizes the offices to use the Secretary of State's secure voter registration website when the applicant has an Indiana driver's license or identification card. The bill also specifies that employees or contractors' employees are authorized to perform this function in the county offices.

**Explanation of State Revenues:** Food Stamps, Medicaid, and TANF administrative expenses are reimbursed by the federal government at a rate of 50%.

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:**

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** FSSA; WIC, Indiana State Department of Health.

**Local Agencies Affected:**

**Information Sources:**

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